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No. 4.

January 3, 1936

TIPS ON MAKING SLIPS AND ON BUYING THEM



Underslips have long hours on duty, with little time off. They have to stand a good deal of strain from walking, sitting, and frequent laundering. If they "can't take it" they're not worth buying, or making.

In ready-made or home-made slips the material must be firm and smooth, with evenly balanced weave -- not too thick and not too thin -- and it must not pull or shift, stretch or shrink. Several rayon fabrics have these qualities, as well as good silks and simple cottons.

A pure dye silk with a smooth, close weave may cost a little more than a weighted or sized silk, but it will wear better. See if there is a label saying "pure-dye silk." If so, according to a 1932 silk industry trade agreement, it may not contain more than 10 percent of weighting, except in dark colors or black, when it may have up to 15 percent. Pull the fabric to see if it is firm or sleazy.

Try a ready-made slip on before buying, to be sure it fits around the hips, bust, and under the arms. Sit down in it. Does it strain at the side seams? Are there wrinkles and bulges about the waistline that will spoil the appearance of your dress? A slip should be about an inch shorter than the dress it is worn with.

Adjustable straps help some, but once adjusted, with the slip fitting bust and shoulders properly, they may as well be anchored. If there is lace at the top edge, the straps should extend to the fabric. Branching straps,

attached in two places, distribute strain. On slips with bound edges, straps are usually caught to the edge of the binding and in time break the material at that point. Sew reinforcements on the wrong side with blind stitching.

Workmanship can lengthen or shorten the life of a garment, and it can make ironing easier or harder. The cut of the slip determines its lines -- bias, curved, or straight. These lines, and the kind of fabric -- firm or sleazy -- will make a difference in the kind of seam to use. Felled seams launder well, and so do French seams, since both have all raw edges turned in. On firm materials pinked or flat stitched seams are desirable, and on bias and curving seams they are preferable to fells.

The top edge and the hem should be simple and strong. Examine lace-trimmed, ready-made slips to see that the lace is not weak in spots. Lace at the lower edge is undesirable unless you are certain the length is right, that the slip hangs evenly, and that no adjustments will ever be necessary. On a slip you make yourself, a facing strengthens the top edge, and it may be decorated with a shell edge or simple blanket stitch. Use a small machine stitch and even stitching, making seams the same width throughout. Stitched narrow straps of the same material as the slip are more durable than ribbon straps.

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